
Frequently Asked Questions

What is the anticipated timeline for completion of the NAAHP and how will it be implemented?

It is anticipated the NAAHP will be completed and approved by the JSA by June 2007. Federal agencies will then have the option of adopting recommendations put forth in the Plan.

Who is writing the Plan?

Members of the *Task Force* will write actual chapters of the Plan. The final decisions regarding chapter contents will be made by the FEC.

How will State and Tribal jurisdictions interface with Federal jurisdiction?

The intent of the NAAHP is for the Federal government to work in partnership with States, Tribes, and aquaculture industries to develop strategies and provide guidance to protect US aquatic resources and commercial interests. The Federal government recognizes the authorities of States and Tribes to regulate and manage resources within their jurisdiction, including the management of aquatic animal species and the pathogens they might carry; however, international commerce regulations dictate that Federal agencies have regulatory authority over the international movements of live aquatic animals. Section 4 of the Animal Health Protection Act of 2002 (7 USC 8301-8316) and "Title 50" (50 CFR Part 16.13) provides the Federal government with the authority regarding requirements for the international importation of live aquatic animals.

Does the Plan become mandatory upon completion?

The NAAHP is a guidance document. As such, the NAAHP will make recommendations for programs, protocols and regulations that must go through the Federal administrative rulemaking process before implementation. Additionally, elements of the NAAHP, such as voluntary certification programs, will require funding and possibly legislation in order to implement. Other elements, such as import protocols, may not require funding but must still go through the Federal rulemaking process which involves a comment period from the public. The *Task Force* recognizes that the NAAHP is a living document and can be adjusted to meet the needs of the stakeholders. The implementation process will also provide for a mechanism to allow for updates to the NAAHP on an ongoing basis.

Task Force Contacts

WEB SITE

www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/aqua/index.html

Click on "Hot Topics"

USDA/APHIS

Jill Rolland

Jill.B.Rolland@aphis.usda.gov

Gary Egrie

Paul.G.Egrie@aphis.usda.gov

DOC/NOAA Fisheries

Kevin Amos

Kevin.Amos@noaa.gov

DOI

Marilyn Blair

Marilyn_J_Blair@fws.gov



Photo Credit: NOAA Fisheries

This pamphlet was prepared in January 2006, to keep interested parties informed about the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP). Should the NAAHP recommend changes in existing regulations, prior to making those changes, the participating agencies, USDA/APHIS, DOI/FWS, and DOC/NOAA Fisheries will publish a general notice of proposed rulemaking with a detailed description of proposed changes to invite public comment. Since Federal regulations are subject to change, affected parties must familiarize themselves with the most current regulations and are responsible for complying with them.

National Aquatic Animal Health Plan



Department of
Agriculture

APHIS

Department of
Commerce

NOAA
FISHERIES

Department of
Interior

FWS



January 2006

Mission

Develop a National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP) in partnership with the aquaculture industries of the United States, the fifty States and U.S. territories, Native American Indian Tribes, regional and local government entities, and other interested stakeholders.

Background

The Joint Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (JSA) is authorized by the *National Aquaculture Act of 1980* (16 U.S.C. 2801 et al) and is composed of representatives from Federal agencies that participate in aquaculture activities in the United States. The JSA functions under the direction of the Office of Science and Technology Policy and the Science Adviser to the President of the United States. The purpose of the JSA is to ensure communication, cooperation and collaboration between the Federal agencies on matters related to aquaculture. The JSA has commissioned task forces to address and/or assist member agencies on critical issues for aquaculture such as research, aquaculture facility effluent regulations, registration of needed pesticides and medications for use in aquaculture, and shrimp diseases. In 2001, the JSA directed the Federal agencies with the responsibility for managing aquatic animal health (Agriculture-APHIS, Interior-Fish and Wildlife Service, and Commerce-NOAA Fisheries) to establish a National Aquatic Animal Health Task Force on Aquaculture (*Task Force*). The *Task Force* would be responsible for drafting a national aquatic animal health plan (NAAHP).

The *Task Force* brought stakeholders together in Washington, DC in December, 2001, to receive input on their aquatic animal health needs and to give direction on the necessary elements of a NAAHP. Another meeting was convened in Tucson, Arizona in June of 2002 to further define the objectives of the plan. In April of 2003, the outline and development process of the NAAHP was approved by the Federal Executive Committee (*FEC*) of the *Task Force*.

Purpose

- Enhance the protection of U.S. cultured and wild aquatic animal resources from the importation of foreign aquatic pests, diseases, and their causative agents.
- Facilitate the safe and legal movement of aquatic animals and their products in interstate and international commerce.
- Ensure the availability of diagnostic and certification services equivalent to those provided to other sectors of agriculture.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of Federal agencies in order to implement the NAAHP, recognizing that the Chief Veterinary Officer of USDA/APHIS is the official representative for the United States to the World Organization for Animal Health, also known as the Office International des Epizooties (OIE).
- Ensure that the NAAHP is developed through shared leadership of the relevant Federal agencies because of their perspectives, histories, expertise and authorities for implementing the plan.
- Provide to the Secretaries of appropriate Federal agencies resolutions concerning roles and responsibilities of Federal agencies, the infra-structures to carry out their responsibilities, and resources needed to implement the NAAHP. Identify and obtain new resources if current resources are insufficient.

Process

- Stakeholders are invited to provide input on elements of the NAAHP (December 2001 and June 2002).
- The *Task Force* and the JSA approve the approach and outline of the NAAHP (2003).
- Experts representing the aquaculture industries, States, Tribes, academia, Federal agencies, and relevant stakeholders are invited to provide input on specific elements of the NAAHP via *working groups* (2004-2005).
- *Task Force* members provide an ongoing outreach and awareness program by giving presentations at a variety of public forums and stakeholder meetings.
- The *Task Force* will draft chapters of the NAAHP as sufficient input and information are available (ongoing).
- Draft chapters of the NAAHP are approved by the *FEC* of the *Task Force* and then are submitted to the JSA for further consideration. The draft chapters are posted on the NAAHP website for review and comment by the public to ensure a participatory and transparent process.
- As input is received, draft chapters will be edited to reflect the improvements. Each draft will be numbered and dated to maintain its identity.
- Final and complete draft will be approved by the JSA (2007).
- Federal agencies will implement recommendations in the NAAHP as are deemed appropriate and as resources allow.